

Riffing With [Larry Charles](#)
by Trev Gibb
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Have you visited the 'Masked and Anonymous Database'?

Yes I have its amazing!

I'm happy you like it...

Oh I'm very pleased, I'm very touched actually.

I've got quite a lot of points to filter through and how I'll approach them I'm not sure, but I'll plunge ahead...

We'll just riff around and I'm sure that something interesting will come out of it.

I think the movie speaks so much truth; it's been a long time since I've seen a film like that. Did you intend it to be a social commentary?

Well you know, it's interesting, we never had any intention at all or any concern about results or consequences. We really started from a very purely organic place, just exchanging ideas thoughts; sometimes a word or an expression in a very almost unconscious, automatic, writing it up technique, without imposing any order on it and letting the order and patterns emerge out of it naturally.

The film is very poetic in feel and very Shakespearian, especially in the case of the screenplay...

I agree, that's you know... Bob inspires you to reach these heights you didn't think were possible.

It must've been an experience meeting Bob Dylan?

There's nothing to describe it. It was the most life changing experience of my life...its just meeting your guru, just holding a mirror to you and the world and saying look. That's what it's like being with him, just surprising you at all times, confounding you at all times,

confusing you. But all with the end result of cracking open your head and just seeing more deeply and more clearly.

Dylan always seems discreet, but his discretion speaks a thousand things at the same time, he seems to evoke and provoke so much...

He does and he's very enigmatic and very complex and very dense, which is no surprise. And so he will never say, "This is what I think". He will have something and he will say it and I will say "Wow you really feel strongly about that!" and he'll say, "Well somebody does".

Very Dylanesque...

Laughs

The film is so layered; it's colourful, provocative, like a puzzle...

Yes, the last piece of the puzzle was you. That to me is the key. When I go around the country to these screenings I tell people it is a puzzle and the last piece is you. You have to kind of be involved and interact with it. And wherever you are in your life at that moment you're gonna see certain things in that movie like you do in a Bob Dylan song. And you may come back a year from now or ten years from now and be in a different place and see the movie in a different light as well.

The film has only really played in America. Is it going to play England any time soon?

Yes it should be opening. I know there's a film festival in England that it's gonna open at. BBC films, was one of the financial partners, so it's definitely meant to open in England. It's gonna open all over Europe now; over the next couple of months, actually.

There have been rumours of a DVD release coming out soon, is there any plans finalised for what will appear on the DVD?

There is a DVD that's going to come out I believe in February, with some deleted scenes and some other bonus stuff. But that's not the definitive version there's still yet my directors cut somewhere down the line, if we can get the financing together we'll put that out too, that's kind of more expensive to put together.

Will there ever be a definitive version? There's so much going on and so many scenes that didn't make it.

Well right. By definitive I only mean like... everything, we shot everything that's in the script. And there is a version of that, that from a historically archival position might be worth having out there as well... I also have hours and hours of Bob rehearsing. And I kept a camera rolling while he was doing all the music, never cutting so I have all the between song patter and warm-up stuff, and I feel like there's a great historical archive there not to be exploited commercially, I think that would be wrong, but at some point down the line, way down the line perhaps, it should have some historical value.

It's very intimate... Most of those live scenes with the band. The camera perspective creates such an intimate feel.

As far as the music goes, one of our earliest conversations was how to shoot the music. Bob had some very specific ideas about how he thought music should look and what's gone wrong with music on film and why he has felt that he had never actually been well represented performing on film. And we went back and looked at some things we both liked a lot. Like old *Johnny Cash* shows, and even *Ed Sullivan* and *The Grand Old Opry* shows with Hank Williams and we found they basically used one camera and put you right there and there was an intimacy created between the musician and the home audience And we really responded to that, and nowadays people are afraid to stay on that one shot - and we cut and we cut, and this kind of MTV style - and we made a conscious decision to go back to this more pure version of presenting the music and it wound up being very dramatic.

You get right in perspective-wise. It's very direct. The cinematography on the whole is so rich. One frame is like a photograph with so much going on in every part of the screen.

I'm glad you noticed that. Thank you very much, that was an effort to... we were both attracted to density and I tried to just fill the frame up at all times with a lot of information. The way Bob's songs filled with references and allusions so that you could go back over and over again and listen to and never get tired. I wanted this to have that same quality.

There appears to be layers at every level in the film. One of the sections on the website actually deals with the idea of allusions and references.

Yes I've read that, it's great. The thing is again I've been to about 20 cities where I've hosted screenings and answered questions and what's so great is that the audience, as I said, the audience being part of the puzzle, and the puzzle pieces can be moved around and create a different puzzle each time. Also, besides the last piece being you, the puzzle itself is constantly shifting. But people see things in the movie beyond even what was intended and those are valid quite often. I've heard interpretations of aspects of the movie that were certainly not conscious on our part. But when I looked back, I go "absolutely! That's a very valid interpretation of what's going on there"

The film is like a living art form and I'm sure it will grow through time and have a resonance like Dylan's songs do. Even politically some of the references in there could apply to now or ten years ahead.

Or a hundred years ago, Yes. Well that was one of the themes. We didn't intend for it to be as prophetic as it turned out to be, it was again no intention to comment or be topical in any way, we were more interested in talking about the idea of the cycles of history and how history repeats itself. We think we're unique, we think we're in a unique time but really this is just another cycle of history that resembles every other one that's come before it and as it turned out it wound up being very prophetic and topical as well.

Were you thinking about W. B Yeats and "Turning and turning within the widening gyre"?

Yes, well when you're with Bob again you with a Bard on that level. Someone who is... whose job it is in life to be thinking about those things and commenting and writing about those things, so you're in that state of mind when you're with him and inevitably in the way Bob has throughout history - his own history - your tapping into things, into a certain psyche again almost unconsciously but inevitably.

I've seen this film countless times, I found it initially very overwhelming but it made me more willing to engage with it and to explore.

Yeah, well people who are willing to engage with it, that's usually the reaction. What happened with some of the critics was that they were so overwhelmed at first that they checked out and they never got to engage with it and see all the levels and the layers and all the different things that were available to them in the movie. But people like you, and again, I've gone around the country to all kinds of obscure places and the audience is very willing to engage and they

have that sense of being overwhelmed. And then they let it wash over them and they enter into it and experience it and they wind up having a great experience from it.

You've tapped into something that at this particular moment in cinema history is dwindling. Now, when you go see a movie its escapism and you sit back and let it do its things, whereas with this film you have to engage and take part.

Yes, well most movies today are very cut and dry. It's a very risk-averse business now because there is so much money involved. They need people to come in and move on. And this is not a movie that's intended that way. This is a movie that's intended to be savoured and revisited like something you'd see in a museum or a poem you'd read in a book, rather than mass-market entertainment.

I do feel it will gain a Cult Status somewhere along the line. As I've said it has richness and a resonance.

Bob was very clear about that. And his work, often a lot of his greatest work, has been met with disdain when it comes out. And then later on people go, "Wow! You know 'Slow Train Coming' is a brilliant album", or whatever... You know what I mean? And I look at this that way also. This is not done for a commercial acceptability; this is done to make a statement. And it's out there and people will find it and it will always be there for them.

I think Dylan said, "What's wrong with being misunderstood?"

Yeah that's Bob. I mean when we were working on it he had a line that he wanted to put in and he said he had a line and I said, "Bob I have to say even in the script I don't think people are gonna understand that line". And he said, "Well what's so bad about being misunderstood?" And I think he was saying... He's a person; he's been understood, he's done that, he's now willing to risk being misunderstood in order to reach a deeper level of understanding. And that's a very courageous place for an artist to go.

I think that's true artistic temperament. You're willing to take risks because you know art has to extend beyond the normal confines of what you must and must not do and again I guess that applies to cinema culture at this point in time. The fear to experiment and to be profound has led to the studio system conforming.

Exactly, well that's why, this was conceived, financed, produced... Everything about this movie was done outside of that system. I mean again there was no intention, no result that was desired. There was no commercial consideration in making this movie. This is a purely instinctive process which is really an anathema to the making of movies today.

It is such a shame that the critics could not engage with this movie. They completely missed the boat.

Well Bob again in his way told me that the critics wouldn't get this movie, but the audience would if they had a chance to see it and that has been born out by my own personal experience. I think the critics are now sort of for the most part, part of a larger system, a more corporate system. And this (the movie) just doesn't fit into any niche that they can really relate to. They don't have time anymore, there's not that kind of serious film criticism that there was 20, 30 years ago. They don't have time to write the kind of detailed soft pieces about a film, even if they wind up rejecting it, they don't have time to even think about it before they reject it. Here it's just so easy to go "Oh Bob Dylan, Oh Larry Charles... Oh it's a difficult movie, how dare they make a movie. I'm not going to engage in this" or "I'm not gonna try to look into the movie I'm not gonna try to be part of the movie." And the end result is a lot of bad reviews obviously.

'Masked and Anonymous' has a mood of the Carnavalesque, for example, 'Desolation Row goes to the Movies'. The colour, the lighting, the characters and so forth... There is a cartoon feel, especially in the case of the main soundstage.

Yes, well it was a great synthesis of various things that were going on in our heads at the time and if we started today it might be totally different, you know.

The characters evoke a Shakespearian quality, each of the characters seems to act as a device in the story. One of my favourite performances is that of Luke Wilson, who seems to have a more moralistic voice in the movie.

Luke was great.

He just gets the part down perfectly, so real, so convincing.

Luke is also one of these people. He travelled with me quite a bit on this tour I did and he's one of these people also who totally gets it. I mean people either understand how cool it is to make a movie with

Bob Dylan or they don't and he was one of the people, he was the first person to commit to the movie. He just called me up and said look "I will do anything in this movie," and he and I became very close friends through the making of this movie.

Yeah he appears to be a really good guy.

Yeah he's a great guy

All the actors who contributed all provide really great performances. John Goodman's performance for example.

It's fantastic... It's a great performance.

All the characters to me have this underlying cynicism that's rounded off with satire. In fact the film is full of dark humour and black comedy.

Well right, the dark humour and black comedy, which is so much a part of Bob's music also, was missed by a lot of people, a lot of the critics I think. Whereas, the audience was able to see it and I think by the same token the performances are so monumental, but very distinctive and unique and non-naturalistic in a way and yet they also give dimensions of the characters, at the same time that it was again hard for critics - used to a straight ahead naturalistic performance - to kind of gauge what this performance means, you know Jessica Lange or John Goodman

This is no normal movie. These people are really absorbed into the characters.

Yes they committed and that's the kind of actors they are. If you look at Jessica Lange and John Goodman and Jeff Bridges body of work, Penelope Cruz... you see, they're very risk taking actors, they're willing to go out there and they work. They were all great.

One of the scenes that only got to me later on was the scene in the movie about the shooting gallery of world leaders. That's hilarious!

Yeah, yeah that was really funny, I agree. Well again we initially set out to have different look-alikes and I couldn't find good look-alikes of the versions I wanted and finally we started to, well at a least there's a good Ghandi, and it was like, let's use that. So it was again, you know, the synchronicity of it. You had to be very open to the synchronicity of it to take advantage of it.

A lot of key scenes in the film take place on staircases, such as Jack Fate's release from prison, his conversation with Oscar Vogel and his visit to his mother's grave. There are also references to stairs in the dialogue, like when Pagan Lace says, "We'll take the stairs" or when Fate says, "My fall from grace didn't end at the bottom of those stairs." What was the logic behind the staircase motif running through the film?

Yes, Yes, absolutely. Right that's true. You know something. What you just said actually was one of those things that happened at the screenings, I hadn't thought about that. There's a lot of staircases imagery in the film. I just was attracted when I went around scouting I was attracted to staircases in around LA there are a lot of dramatic staircases hidden from view. If you ever seen Laurel and Hardy's, *The Music Box*, there were incredible staircases in L.A., on the side of hillsides and I'd be struck by them as we drove by. And I'd say we could do the scene here, we could do the scene there. Something unconscious was drawing me to them. That's a very interesting comment, I hadn't even thought about that. But I actually see it now. It's totally valid.

Funny you should mention that but that Laurel and Hardy scene with the piano I believe was influenced by where Stan Laurel originally came from, in North Shields, which is ten minutes from where I am now. I believe there are some stairs there exactly like what's portrayed in that film.

Yeah, yeah, Wow! Well that's really interesting. It's all connected ultimately.

The poetic feel of the movie and especially some of the lines in the movie is astounding... lines such as: "Hospitals built as shrines to the diseases they create" and "Vietnam War lost in the whore houses of Saigon", and importantly "We spend our time trying to kill time, but when all is said and done time ends up killing us"...

I know. Sometimes Bob would come in with a line a like that and say do you think we should use that and I'd go, "You crazy!!?? It's such an amazing line, you just changed my life with that line", you know. But Bob is very irreverent in relation to his own work and he's very willing to... he doesn't like it to be pretty, he likes to twist it and push it and make it sound wrong, you know, 'Only time will tell who has fell and who's been left behind'. You know, he really likes to sort of flirt with the wrongness of it, to see what might be elicited by that and with a

lot of these lines he would play with them and you know where I might be really satisfied with the pretty version of it, he would want to push further and deeper and see if we can kind of twist it around somehow. It was a fascinating process to go through.

It's that subversive nature that makes the film is so intense and so great. 'Masked and Anonymous' totally subverts the notion of how a film should be. It isn't a movie as you would define a movie, it isn't a conventional movie, but that's why it's so great. Once you get into it there's so much.

I totally agree, I mean I want to almost not call it a movie, because it's so Brechtian and so theatrical and so literary and so poetic... It seemed almost limiting to call it a movie.

So is it a work in progress? Every time it expresses something slightly different.

Yes, well one of the things that I've said and I've felt a lot about this, is the concept of the finished product. We've come to believe in this society that something is finished, but that's really an illusion and this is a movie that really can be... if I could I would work on it for the rest of my life and change it and play with it and re-do it, and take the pieces apart and put it back together. Really it's a flowing fluid thing rather than a finished product.

The passion that watching the film creates seems to last and especially in your case

Well I feel responsibility to it. I feel that it was something that was born out of a very organic, pure process and I feel like it's my responsibility to take care of it. It's a very precious thing and yet it's a very resilient thing and I want people to experience it. I really think that everybody who winds up experiencing it is glad they did. But it's been hard to get it to people, that's been the biggest obstacle really.

But it's great that you and Bob can put up your receivers and allow this stuff to flow through you and for the art to seep through...

Well again, that's the inspiration that he has been to me, I mean he is a purely instinctive person, he doesn't judge his thoughts. These are my thoughts and they might have levity they might not, let's find out. He really just follows his instincts. Look, they made him Bob Dylan so he has reason to trust those instincts and so that was the philosophy I

adopted. It was like, "we're just gonna trust our instincts here and see where it takes us"

One of the phrases that strikes me, and seems to resonate through the movie is the phrase "As long as I keep talking I know I'm still alive". All the characters seem to be governed by this idea, this frustration, in finding something real, such as Pagan Lace's tragic pleas of, "Save me, save me".

Yes, exactly. That's exactly right. There is a sense of the film on one level being about communication and the breakdown of communication and how do we even hear, what do we hear? What is the process by which we hear someone else, when the words come out of someone else's mouth? Things like that we were interested in. We're interested in language itself. Language itself becomes a theme of the film. What is the purpose of language? How is language used to transmit ideas? These are kind of interesting, complex themes that are there again, part of the fabric as well.

Of course the film itself uses language in many different ways, not just musically, or vocally, but its there visually, it's in what you hear and what you don't hear. It's everywhere. It's often only suggested. In fact there are suggestions everywhere in the film. And all of these things going on simultaneously can lead you off in so many different directions.

Right, and even when your seeing a visually dense frame you are also hearing a cacophony usually in the background of that frame as well, that could be peeled away as well to hear a lot of different things going on too.

Well. even the reference to "Evil Doers" as spoken by Edmund certainly has a resonance with the 'here and now'.

Yeah and at the same time there's a kind of, almost a quaintness to that expression. And Bob is very interested in that and I think if you listen to 'Love and Theft' its there too. And I think this is part of that same period in his work which is the juxtaposition of the old and the quaint and the old fashioned with the post-modern. He's trying to really juxtapose those forms and see what happens.

He seems to have retained - and it certainly shows in the film - or regained what he had in the 65-66 period of stream of consciousness, but there's another element to it completely. I was wondering is there any connection between 'Love and

Theft' and 'Masked and Anonymous'? Did either/or inspire the other? Did some of the lines from 'Masked and Anonymous' appear in 'Love and Theft' and so forth?

Yes, what happened was, he was working on 'Love and Theft' at the same time and in fact I had the privilege of going to the recording studio and what happens is, a lot of lines that didn't wind up in 'Masked and Anonymous', winded up in Love And Theft and vice versa. Again we're mixing and matching and sort of making our own puzzle. And so there were quite a few things like that, that emerged. Again, it was part of his interest at the time. I think from 'Time Out Of Mind' through this movie you can almost look at now as a period, like the *born-again period*, or the *electric period*. And I think that now he's done that, the culmination is maybe the movie, now I think you're going to see him drift for a while until he finds that next thing that interests him.

This movie explores the idea of things that are not defined, in many ways and Dylan doesn't go for perfection.

Right, he very much embraces the imperfect, and the beauty of the imperfect, the beauty of the flaw and he's not afraid of that. And that's part of his courage as an artist. Also, you know, he recognises the illusion of perfection... This goes back to the idea of the finished product also, which is why there is such a wealth of Bob Dylan bootleg material also.

Well he inspires a lot of that. Mainly because he is an art form, what he does is an art form. There's a respect for the art so much so that people want to hear more because he's such an experimentative performing artist.

Yes

And 'Masked and Anonymous' is as much an example of this performance art.

Yes

As Pagan Lace says about the songs, "They may not be recognisable", the idea of change and the thing with 'Masked and Anonymous' and even Dylan as a performing artist is that you may see something once, but the next time you see it, it won't be the same.

That's right; it's constantly fluid and ever changing. It's like a natural bi-product of who he is. Very interesting that way... he's very comfortable also - and inspired me to be more comfortable - with the concept of ambiguity. He is willing again to court ambiguity, court confusion, in order to explore the ambiguous nature of whatever it is we're talking about and when people are finally able to straddle that ambiguity they get some deeper level out of the work and people who don't, people who can't handle the ambiguity, turn away and those are the people that don't wind up benefiting from him.

And ultimately there's a message there, or as the editor states, "There is a story there" and it comes in many different ways in the movie, whether it be moralistic or not, there is a message.

Yes exactly and again it depends who you are and where you are when you see the movie what you'll draw from

Exactly, and where you are in your life as well.

Yes, yes....

The film will continue to grow I know that in maybe ten years time a line in the film will jump out like never before, it will have a resonance. This even applies with 'Love and Theft'. I don't know if Dylan or anyone else is aware of this, though he probably chuckles to himself over it, but there are lines in 'Love and Theft' that come from...

The Japanese book?

Yes

Yeah, the 'Confessions of a Yakuza'... Yeah, well a couple of things about Bob: First of all, he is like one of the last of the well-read people, you know what I mean? He's so well read and well read in the sense that he can quote anything. He can quote the Bible, he can quote Rimbaud, he can quote Yeats, he can quote whatever it is and he has just a really innate knowledge of literature, no matter what the source, in many different languages also. By the same token, he is constantly... he has these fragments, these bits rolling round in his head all the time and he's constantly - almost like a roulette wheel - trying different bits together and seeing what happens and so when people say, "Oh this is from 'Confessions of a Yakuza', I think he laughs, because he's taken a totally non-poetic sentence, perhaps out of the middle of a paragraph of 'Confessions of a Yakuza' and turned it into art.

The album itself conjured up the feel of the America South in places, so how can you take a line from a Japanese book about a gangster and make it part of what appears to be a vision of the American South or the lost American South?

Exactly, taking these seemingly mundane lines from this Japanese book and totally re-imagining them in this other context. It's the way art is actually made and I think again it was a quick little glimpse into his process, which is fascinating.

In 'Masked and Anonymous' that whole idea applies also, references, allusions and so forth and I guess therefore there's a lot linkage to people like T. S. Eliot.

Absolutely, well again we're talking about juxtaposing a lot of different forms, almost stripping them together, one after the other; a biblical reference might be followed by a reference to Shakespeare, which might be followed by a film-noir reference. Just constantly pushing and mixing and matching and seeing if they hold together, it's an experiment to see if they hold together.

There is definitely a noir influence there...

Yes, that was a big influence. We talked about movies like 'Key Largo' and I've described it as 'sci-fi-film-noir-musical-comedy'. And I see Bob as this kind of post- apocalyptic Humphrey Bogart or Clint Eastwood. Yeah and I think Bob is very much of that era also. Those were movies that probably really made an impression on him.

Well, 'Empire Burlesque' is made up of lines from 'The Maltese Falcon' and so forth.

Yes, yes.

And of course while watching 'Masked and Anonymous', watching the performances and watching Dylan's performance as well as the use of lines in the film harks back to that whole idea.

Absolutely, that was again, very intended, very intentional.

Most of the critics who see the film don't see an art form. They have resentment to its experimentative nature and this whole Yakuza situation with 'Love and Theft' only fuels their negativity and fuels controversy.

Right, well people thought they had something, again, this sensationalistic aspect of the media today. People thought, "We've caught Bob Dylan somehow". But instead what they did was – and this is why the story fell apart – because it was so much more complex and so much more enigmatic and ambiguous than the way it was presented, that the media couldn't handle it after a while. It's like, if you really want to enter this world, the world of Bob's head, you better take your shoes and get ready for a long journey.

And "You've got to be born on my side"

That's right, that's right, and the media was not prepared to do that, and of course this movie is also a movie where Bob really confronts the media and this is another reason why the media have been somewhat resistant to it.

The media in many ways controls the minds of people. It's destroying art, and there's a lot of lines in the film that apply to that idea: "They have a reach and resonance more than even they themselves realise". Again, this whole idea was also presented in Michael Moore's 'Bowling for Columbine', the idea of manufactured fear, to make the masses consume. 'Masked and Anonymous' also addresses this issue of the media and corporate powers.

It creates an anxiety and makes it much easier to make people vulnerable and therefore controlled

Truth again...

Well when you're around Bob that's what's coming out of him. You know, he's somebody who's seen more than you have and knows more than you know and if you're wise you listen and he will tell you everything you need to know, but you're gonna have to do the work of interpreting it and that's how the movie is also, it's like Bob is telling you everything, this is another aspect of the movie. This is Bob telling you everything about himself also, but it's not laid out clearly, you have to do the work of kind of putting the pieces together.

I think it may have been Andrew Motion, or perhaps Sean Wilentz who spoke of how in 'Masked and Anonymous' Bob is able to say the things that as Bob Dylan he cannot say, but it can be done as Jack Fate and with 'Masked and Anonymous'. Of course when Bob is talking about himself he often refers to himself in the third person.

Absolutely, well there is an aspect of Bob, you know, he needs to be called Bob for instance, because 'Dylan' is our problem. Dylan is what we've imposed on him and he holds on to his Bob-ness his humanness in way, his realness, because if he gets sucked into the Dylan part, that's the mythological part that everybody has kind of created, that is almost too gigantic a burden for him to carry.

Yes, it must be hard to retain any form of reality or even normality when you're faced with that.

Yes...

In a documentary made about 'Hearts of Fire', Bob talks about looking through the windows of a pub and seeing people being very real, but once he's walked into the room, he knows that realness will disappear.

Right, right. Well I think also when the time comes people will start to see the connection between Bob's cinema work. One of the things I realised after the fact, I was watching 'Don't Look Back' recently and I realised that the scene where he has the argument with the English journalist, that's Jeff Bridges character forty years ago. And then wow! It started to connect to me and then also and I'd seen 'Don't Look Back' five times and I watched it again recently and at the end of the movie, there Bob's sitting at the back of a limousine after a performance, staring out the window, driving away and the camera just stays on him and I'm thinking that's a parallel ending to the ending of our movie.

Yes, the end of 'Masked and Anonymous' where he's handcuffed in the van.

Yes and I thought to myself, you know, when I had the idea of that last shot of Bob's face in the movie, you know that image just popped into my head and I loved that image. And then when I saw 'Don't Look Back' I thought "God, that's a beautiful companion piece now", and again, blurring that line between fiction and reality, and despite the mythological fable-like quality of the movie, there's also a documentary-like quality to it as well. And I love that idea of blurring that line.

Everything he does is pioneering, moving to the next stage, to something different and it's very the case with this movie you've made with him, it's very pioneering.

Good, good, thank you.

Also with Jeff Bridges there is a connection to the Dylan of 65-66, these characters all representing different things at once.

Yes, yes, and those connections work on some levels and they're more apparent on some levels than others and its there for you to favour and explore and examine and analyse.

What gave you the whole idea for the Carnavalesque feel?

It just started out with conversations about some images that we liked and slowly it began to emerge out of that.

Yes and it adds to the depth of the film the need for the viewer to be digging and always find something else, something new.

Yeah, well for some people that's a great experience and there are people that just love to do that, and I love to do it. And I tried to make a movie that I wanted to see, ultimately, and so that's why that exists like that.

How did it feel to be moving form the territory of 'Curb Your Enthusiasm' to 'Masked and Anonymous'?

Well it was great, it's just an expansion of who I am. 'Curb Your Enthusiasm' taps into a lot of wonderful things and Larry David is brilliant in a very parallel way actually to Bob. I often compare them, because they're both sort of visionaries, they can do what they do, they can't alter their vision based on the market place. This is what they have to offer, if you like it, great, if you don't like it, this what they have, there's no choice in the matter.

Learning how to collaborate with Larry was good preparation for working with Bob in a lot of ways. In fact I'm about to give Larry, for Christmas, the 15 CD set.

The Remaster Series?

Yes, the Remaster Series. I'm gonna give him that, because he was not that conscious of Bob and he came to see the movie and he liked it and he liked the soundtrack, so I'm giving that as a gift.

The soundtrack itself is very clever, it has this multicultural aspect. The mixing of cultures is very apparent, That L.A., South American feel. Why did you go for that whole feel?

Well what I went for was a combination of things. First of all, I collected images photographs; journalistic photographs from third world countries for a couple of years. And I just saw similarities in them and at the same time I really spent a lot of time in downtown L.A. which is this juxtaposition of various culture, the sort of crossroads of numerous cultures, African, Spanish, Mexican, Central America, South America, Eastern European, American, poor, rich and then I would look at the these pictures of third world countries and they looked a lot like downtown Los Angeles and I started to sort of get this idea of the cacophony of this country, that if you look at one direction in Los Angeles you see Beverly hills and the beach, but if you look in the other direction it's a third world country. This kind of weirdly cacophonous, multi-ethnic, third world country and so I loved that idea of exploring that a little bit more deeply, and then I started thinking about the cover songs in different languages and then Jeff Rosen was generous enough to just open the vaults to me and give me access to all those covers. There's thousands and thousands of these foreign covers and I just started listening to them and some just drew you in so powerfully like the Japanese version of My Back Pages, yeah and "this is such a natural here". It also makes a statement in the movie that people don't realise the impact Bob Dylan has had on their lives, he's so pervasive its almost overwhelming.

Do you have a favourite cover?

Well I think the Japanese version of 'My Back Pages'... I was looking for a song to open the movie with and that song somehow combined the energy and the force and the power and the confusion and lucidity, it just said everything all at once to me. It really was a very inspiring moment and I recognised that could be the first song. So I love that, I really like almost all the music, there's so much that we couldn't put in the movie and so much we couldn't put on the soundtrack. And again it's amazing when you think about it that Bob has such a gigantic Japanese following, yet the difficulty of translating him into Japanese is monumental apparently, and yet there is this incredible powerful cult around him in Japan.

Well when he goes to Japan it's always a huge thing.

It's a huge thing yes.

My favourite is the song that is used when Fate goes to visit his mother's grave and I think its Sertab's 'One More Cup of Coffee'.

Yes 'One More Cup of Coffee', fantastic also.

It has this real transcending feel, it rises, it has an almost synthetic, yet orchestrated feel to it.

Yes it's very dramatic that's one of my favourites as well. It has a dram to it a kinda Middle Eastern exoticism to it; a mystery. Again it captures the best of Bob's music, it reinterprets it.

Even the original has that Arabic feel:

Yes, yes, it does

Was the closing song going to be 'City of Gold'?

No. You know, again I only had a certain amount of input into the soundtrack and they felt they wanted to put some bonus tracks on that were not from the movie and I argued to put more stuff from the movie on the soundtrack. 'City of Gold's' a great song, which I loved, but I felt there were also songs from the movie we couldn't put on as well. They were pieces of songs that we used that we didn't get to put on the soundtrack. And maybe at some point again there will be a more, quote, 'definitive' version of the soundtrack.

Apart from complimenting the movie, the soundtrack is also works brilliantly as separate entity, but when you listen it enhances the vision you have of the film.

It's definitely a great album, I love the album and again you almost want more and there is a lot more out there obviously.

The soundtrack also works as a nice covers compilation.

Yes, yes, well I mean just the American stuff alone, the Jerry Garcia stuff and The Grateful Dead stuff and I mean I didn't even bother trying to use the Jimi Hendrix version of 'All Along The Watchtower' or Neil Young's 'Blowin' in the Wind', Neil Young does an amazing version of 'Blowin' in the Wind'.

Neil Yong did 'Blowin' in the Wind'? I've never heard that.

Ahh it's on one of his live albums. It is absolutely breathtaking. And there's a great version that I almost used of Bruce Springsteen doing 'Chimes of Freedom'. That is an amazing cover and so some of the American covers that are not quite as prevalent are amazing and intense.

What were the songs you shot for the film that didn't make the cut?

Yeah, well as I said when we filmed the music we kept the camera rolling. He was supposed to do six songs and he wound up doing 22. I think there are four of his performances on the soundtrack. So that leaves like 18 songs that I have, fully filmed. There's probably a handful of those that are traditional songs that he reinterprets with the band.

'Dixie'....

Yeah well 'Dixie' was done initially as a warm-up song for whatever the next song was and it was just so stirring, it was like, "let's film this!"

'Dixie' is absolutely awesome. It says so much about the film and the way it's sung is awesome.

Yes and the theme of that song and the history of that song says so much and resonates throughout the film as well. That was again one of those happy, quote, *accidents*, these synchronistic moment, where it's like wow you're justifying the movie with this song.

Well that's the great thing, the spontaneity, that's where I think great art lies, on the knife edge and it's when you take that jump the art comes through.

I agree with you totally...

What other plans for the DVD as such do you have, such as extra scenes and so forth?

Well that's about all I know about it really. I mean again my input on things like the soundtrack and DVD are: They come to me, they ask me my opinion, I give my input, my very impassioned input and then other people make final decisions about it and I had to let go of it to some degree on that level. And I'm sure it will be very high quality. You'll see a really high quality transfer of the high def, which is good.

What was it shot in again?

It's called 24p. 24 frames progressive scan. Its high definition and it's gonna look great in that format actually, so I'm happy about that. And in terms of stuff I know they're gonna put on, there's a lot of material that didn't make it into the final movie, some whole scenes that were

cut and in a version of the movie that eventually didn't make it into the final version and those will be sort of added as bonus' as well as at least one song that we shot.

Did he record 'Standing in the Doorway'?

Yes he did and I think that will... I think that's going to make it onto the DVD actually. Beautiful version of it...

Well it took him a few years to perform it live, so when it happened it was a big thing.

Yeah it's a great version of it actually and also you'll see the uncut 'Cold Irons Bound' which is also a stirring version of that song.

Yeah, he has a great band too.

Yeah those guys are amazing. And again even that era, kinda is over in a sense. The band has gone through some personnel changes and so it captures that period with that band which was tremendous band for him, they were just really tight, really together, really knowledgeable, and you see them as you do in the movie, musically communicating with each other through the movie.

There's an understanding among them, as there is with the actors in the movie, an understanding of what needs to be achieved.

Right, well you have to get lucky sometimes. We had very game, risk taking people involved in the movie who were ready to commit, ready to take a leap and it produced an amazing thing you know.

Was, 'Tryin' To Get To Heaven', recorded for the film? Because it was suggested in the screenplay

'Tryin' To Get To Heaven'... I'm trying to remember frankly... 'Wicked Messenger'... It may have been. I can't remember right now... I think we did 'Tryin' To Get To Heaven'; yes I'm pretty sure we did it. Hold on one sec (leaves to find out)...

I think there's a section where....

Where Luke and John are talking about it.

Yes where I believe they're talking about life and death and applying it to 'Drifter's Escape', but I think in the screenplay it applies to 'Tryin' To Get To Heaven'.

Yes, that's right, I'm pretty sure. Well again it's one the things, it's part of the ambiguity and as Penelope says, "The songs are imprecise and open to interpretation". And that was one of those moments yes.

The fact that in the screenplay it says 'Tryin' To Get To Heaven' and you use 'Drifter's Escape' is interesting, but still acceptable, because it still applies to the song.

Well, and Bob loves the idea of playing with that. I might say, "Well you know the song's going to be fragmented" and he'd say, "Good, let's do that then", he's also for fragmenting, deconstructing whatever's constructive. "Let's see what happens if we break it apart, lets see what happens if we turn it upside down, lets see".

And why not?

And why not? Exactly

The film has a kind of Jazz element, its experimentative. Bob himself has that. People say he isn't a good singer or a good musician, but if you take away what people say, he is very much a Jazz musician. He works with improvisation, with phrasing. Even his melodies... He sings his songs differently each time, does counter melodies in opposition to the original tune.

Absolutely, he phrases things differently each time, he changes his voice. He has so much more control over his music than people recognise. Even now, he's doing this voice now, that's a kind of wizened old mans voice. Like a Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf voice. But it is a voice.

The thing about this voice is that, the words and the music if even 30 years old, they resonate completely differently, they take on wisdom and an experience, they become convincing. The voice adds the depth that the songs only hint at.

Exactly, it changes the meaning of the song and that's one of the things he's always looking to do is reinvent the songs for himself, he never listens... I was with Jesse, his son one day and I was talking about how on 'Love and Theft' he doesn't really play harp and that I had been listening to 'Pledging My Time' on 'Blonde on Blonde' and he does this avant-garde, Miles Davis sort of harp solo, and how

brilliant that was. And Jesse says, "From the day he walked out of that recording studio for 'Blonde on Blonde', he has never listened to that record again". And that's the way he is you know, he needs to keep it fresh, keep it looking forward, don't look back. He needs to be constantly reinventing it; he can't get sucked into the nostalgia of it. This is the curse of Bob Dylan in a sense, in that he can't really enjoy his music like we do, he has to be continually be reinventing it and that's an interesting dilemma for him.

Dylan can do something amazing on guitar, harmonica, or be it his vocal style and then a year later, or a month later, or a week later he does something else completely different which ruins what happened previously and people will say, "Dylan cant play guitar, he cant sing", but sometimes he can play guitar beautifully and he can sing beautifully, it depends on how you catch the moment and what he's doing.

And I think he's - as I was saying before - the whole thing about being misunderstood: He's played the good guitar, he's sung the songs nicely already, he's done that. If you look at 'Dont Look Back', you see him just standing on stage, him and a guitar, he's amazing, he can play that guitar, he can play that harmonica, he can sing the songs, hit the notes, he's done that now, he's looking to explore what would happen if he risks going almost off, if he risks almost getting to the edge of the expectable version of the song. What will happen, he's curious about that process and he's willing to risk it. And of course the audience, who loves him, is willing to go there with him you know. And cynical people who aren't willing to go there are gonna look at it cynically and he's learned to live with that.

Well, what you said about Miles Davis totally applies, and Joni Mitchell has said that Dylan and herself as well as Miles, are pioneers, the willingness to experiment, to change the boundaries of what it is your working within, or outside of even.

Well this is why in my opinion - look I respect deeply Paul McCartney and The Rolling Stones - but they have essentially become nostalgia acts and Bob is not a nostalgia act, he is still a vital artist, recreating and creating new work all the time, night by night, and that's one of the reasons now, over the last few years especially with this band he had, he became a great concert draw, again because I think he was inspired by groups like The Grateful Dead to come out every night and reinvent the show. So you never knew from night to night what you were gonna get.

Well this band was very important. Charlie Sexton in particular seems to work on a deeply emotional level. So he would feel the song, feel the emotion and then transcribe it, whereas Larry has all the riffs, all the clichés and all the genres and he pumps them through. He has the scientific side and then you have Charlie Sexton weaving within that. And then on the other side you have Dylan who's on a completely different level again, totally trying to subvert it, each time.

Well watch Charlie, watch Bob during the movie and you see... Charlie really was... played a really crucial role in channelling Bob for the rest of the band and kind of waiting on Bob to see where Bob was going and then he would then almost musically explain to the band and then the band was kinda able to follow along. Charlie was a really important conduit in the band as well; because he is such an intuitive musician, that he was able to join with Bob and then he was able to also communicate that musically to the band. Tony has that also, Tony also in his way is doing the same thing.

A lot of musicians such as McCartney have to a certain extent sold out, or stay with the same mould and that's the great thing with Bob, he doesn't.

Well I mean look, The Rolling Stones and Paul McCartney, certainly have amazing songs and it is great to hear Paul McCartney can still sing the songs like he did in 1964, it's amazing and my hats off to him and The Rolling Stones too. I saw them recently, here in L.A. and they sounded great but they are basically recreating the records at this point and they're not really stretching, I'd rather Paul McCartney do ten less songs and stretch... I had the same experience with John Fogarty, I went see John Fogarty about two years ago and I love John Fogarty and I'd never seen him live. He came out, he did every Creedance Clearwater song exactly as it was on the record and he did them perfectly, but when it was over you never felt you needed to see him again.

Paul Simon is very similar in that aspect.

Yes exactly, you don't feel you're... You feel like your getting a pre-packaged event. That if you went back next year you'd get the same thing, instead of next year maybe he'll do a whole different set of songs, a whole different way, which is what Bob offers you. And I think that its hard for these massive acts to sort of do what Bob does, which is, really experiment and really extend his range, it's a scary thing, a very risky thing.

Now Bob's out of the constant media scrutiny he's able to experiment without worrying.

Yes and have this fervent following that is willing to be there with him and be part of that with him.

Paul Simon as a live performer is very polished and in a way his style of live performance to a certain extent represents modern culture. The whole idea of consumerist culture. And the movie highlights the ridiculousness of modern culture.

Well even the idea of the protest songs that they want him to sing, we made that list, it's the irony that these protest songs are owned by large corporations, you know, how much impact can they have? The counter culture has been co-opted. So here are these great songs, these great protest songs but they're owned by the media conglomerates who use them to make money and there's kind of a bitter irony to that. I think that we're exploring there.

The film is so funny. The scene in the bar when Luke is speaking to Fred Ward and there's a line in there.

"If you want the world to be round its round, if you want the world to be flat its flat"... "Who's presiding over this slaughter house, me or you?"

Yes there's that and when the guy replies with "I know some things too!"

Yeah, yeah, and then Luke says, "The more you know, the more you'll suffer".

Which is like a mantra really, "The more you know the more you'll suffer", that almost explains Bob's psyche to a large degree, he knows so much, you know, that it's a burden to be him on a lot of levels.

That whole period from 'Time Out Of Mind' to the film interestingly deals with the whole essence of time; in fact time with Dylan is something that I believe hasn't been studied enough. One of the lines Dylan says is "We try to kill time, but in the end time ends up killing us".

Yeah well and that's Bob, you see him exploring that theme in 'Time Out Of Mind' and 'Love and Theft' and this movie. And you see that in contrast to 'Dont Look Back' or 'Highway 61', where mortality is kind of an abstract concept. Here there's a reality to it, a gravity - no pun

intended – to it. And that’s a big difference; you’re seeing his thoughts through that prism.

The experimentation with time is something prevalent especially in ‘Time Out Of Mind’ and in particular for me in my favourite Dylan song, ‘Standing in the Doorway’ – it stops time.

Yes, that’s really true. And we talk about time and dreamtime and things like that in the movie too and we’re playing with that idea as well in the movie.

“In my dreams I’m walking through intense heat”.

Yes, and then he said, “I don’t pay any attention to my dreams”. I mean Christian Slater has a line and its been cut down now. There’s a longer version of that scene where Christian Slater says to Chris Penn, “Have you noticed when you dream a dream seems to last many hours, but only lasts a few seconds?” and Chris Penn says, “No not really”. So we’re discussing it and we’re also having fun with it at the same time, we’re playing with those ideas and exploring those ideas.

How do you feel about the scholarly response to the film?

Well I think that whether it be Andrew Motion, or Sean Wilentz or Greil Marcus, I think anybody that’s willing to step back and think about this movie and then enter into it, and dive in and explore it and wander around in it the way Bob sort of does, is gonna be rewarded with a lot of very interesting cross-references and allusions and ideas and themes that you don’t normally see in a movie and so in a lot of ways, you know, like *Art Form* chose it as one of their ten best films. It seems it requires people who are not working as movie critics to have the patience and time to explore the movie.

Yes the critics appear, unwilling to accept it in the long-term.

It was long-term project not meant to have a short lifespan. Like all Bob’s work it will be there, available for people to look at down the line.

Do you have a favourite Dylan song, although that’s probably a difficult question?

Yeah it really is. I was listening to ‘Hard Rain’ as I was coming in today, and I was thinking about ‘Desolation Row’, and I was also, I always loved and wanted to put in the movie, ‘The Groom’s Still Waiting At The Altar’, which is one of my favourites and another

favourite of mine is from 'The Bootleg Series', and its called 'Angelina'. It depends on my mood to a large degree. But those are some of the song I tend to go back to.

The songs that seem to strike you are the epics and they fit into the mould of 'Masked and Anonymous' in many ways.

Yes and that's why I didn't use more of those kinda songs in the movie. It seems superfluous almost to use 'Desolation Row' in this movie. There are a lot of great obscure songs. He has beautiful simple songs - the 'Blood On The Tracks' period - about relationships are so resonate, 'Brownsville Girl'... I love 'Joey'. There's just a whole range. I love... This is a song I wanted him to do and for a long time he was going to do for the movie, was, 'Senor', but we wound up using the Jerry Garcia version, which has a beautiful guitar solo. So I could probably be naming favourite songs forever.

Interesting you mention 'Brownsville Girl', there's supposedly a script for that somewhere.

Well there is one. I believe that Jay Cocks has written a script. I don't know what the status of the film is, but I know that a script does exist and has been floating around and I hope that it gets made.

Are you hoping to experiment further with Bob?

Oh even as we were finishing this movie we started working on a sequel so we have been talking about that for quite some time. Whether we will get a chance to sit down and get to work on it any time soon, I'm not sure. But we talked about that not long before we finished this one... we started talking about the next one. I mean he had a great experience making the movie and I think he'd like to do it again.

Well he's obviously found the right person to do it with.

Well we had a very good collaboration, it was very fruitful I mean the fact that we managed to get this all the way through the system and out there on the movie screen was the miracle really. That's what I tell people.

The promotion for the film perfectly suits it also, not too much and not too little and also going on tour with the film and talking about it is also a great help.

Yes exactly. Yeah it helps contextualise it for people too, which I've been happy to do.

Of course most Dylan fans were bound to like this film but overall I think the response has been warm and receptive.

I think so, I've been very... It's been very moving actually to be at these screenings and have people thank me for making the movie and that's a tremendous personal experience to have and I'm grateful to Bob for giving me that chance.

At Sundance you seemed hesitant and expecting a backlash.

Yeah, but you know, it was even reported that I said, "Aren't there any questions?" and I was even doing that with humour, and but it's reported at a certain angle and it sounds like a totally different experience that it actually was. I mean I actually tell people and I'm quite honest about this, that Sundance was a tremendous experience. At the first screening there was so much expectation and so much backlash and so much controversy. But there were two more screenings that were also just amazing, and the audience responded tremendously to those. But those are not really reported about and I was there with Luke and a bunch of people and we went to those screenings and I talked at those screenings. Those were a little more intimate and a little less pressure on them and I almost wish we'd started that way, instead of this big centrepiece premiere with all the stars.

Bob showed up on form as usual, complete with woolly hat and a blonde wig.

Yeah, yeah. [laughs] Always masked and anonymous with him, yes.

Dylan's humour is so underplayed. Once when Dylan performed with Joni Mitchell, the press the next day said "Dylan Smiles" as if to point out that he has no sense of humour, but even when he isn't smiling, he actually is. The straight-faced Sundance performance is proof of this.

Right, exactly, exactly. No he was having fun. The making of the movie pleased him. He enjoyed the process, he enjoyed the challenge, he enjoyed the interaction with the other actors, again he found another thing he wanted to understand and he was a quick learner obviously and really observed the lessons quickly and wound up having these amazing experiences with these other great actors.

What was it like between scenes?

Well first of all because I shot on 24p, I also was not even cutting, I was just kinda jumping on the set and making some adjustments and going back in. Maybe my most brilliant directorial touch was saying to Bob right at the beginning, "Listen, we have 20 days to shoot this movie, if you go back to the trailer after each shot, each take, the crew is just not gonna care, but if I get you a comfortable chair and you sit on the set between takes and so as the crew walks by carrying the cables, carrying the ladders, they can go "Hi Bob" and you can nod at them, these people will die for you" and he said "ok". And so he sat on the set throughout the entire movie and never went to his trailer. So everybody who worked on the show was able to have a personal relationship with Bob and so those people then were willing to do whatever had to be done to make this a great movie, every single person on the movie, and he was just available and accessible to them and that worked out great.

The director of 'Hearts of Fire', tried to get a similar approach, because people normally approach Bob in a very weird and strange way and you have to get away from that problem.

Yeah right, well Bob was in a different place for this movie then he was for 'Hearts of Fire'. And I think he was more curious and more open and there was a lot of other great actors hovering around. I mean I would walk onto the set and there would be Bob and Jeff Bridges and Jessica Lange just kinda hanging out and talking and I was like "Wow! I have to do something now". So it was just a great environment to be in, such a heightened environment.

Did he have much advice for the actors?

He would have instinctive advice about movement, he would have certain things in mind in terms of movement or the way a certain lines should be spoken occasionally and he would suggest that very, very occasionally, but normally once around the set he was an actor and did not try to impose his ideas on anybody else.

Bob's acting I think is very natural in one sense and perhaps this is because you said. "Just be".

Yes exactly and that's not easy to do but he was able to do that.

There is still a layer between him and the camera, but the acting is still really great.

There's a certain level of honesty to it that is very powerful and not typical and I think that also threw a lot of people. It's a strange and unsettling performance really and to most people it comes as a shock, so I think that's why some people had some resistance to it, because again it was kind of like, "Wow this is something I don't really understand", it strips away everything and adds new layers at the same time.

When he's shaving at the mirror in the trailer and Jeff Bridges comes in I think that harks back to 'Renaldo and Clara' in one sense where Renaldo is looking in the mirror. Very similar

Yes, yes, absolutely. And then Jeff is looking in that mirror also and they're both looking back at each other and reflecting on each other, almost like alter egos. A lot of that is almost Bob debating with himself in a sense. The journalist winds up being an interesting shadow figure for Jack Fate and vice versa.

Yes, there's an underlying dialogue between them...

Yes almost like one of them is a ghost in a sense.

Who is it that plays the version of 'Angelina' near the end?

That's a man named Bruce and I wanted to use the actual recording and we couldn't make the instrumental parts work. It didn't seem to work with the words, it got intrusive, so we had him come in and basically do an instrumental version that we were able to use and he did it in a couple of other places in the movie as well. I was very committed with trying to use actual songs from wherever, but there were a couple of places where I just couldn't make it work, we couldn't make the music edit work, so he was able to come in and adapt for the specific space we were talking about.

There's also a part in the movie with a riff that sounds like 'Gotta Serve Somebody' as well.

Yes, that also I think... I had started with a gospel version of 'Gotta Serve Somebody'. I think it might have been Mavis Staples actually. But as the sequences got more polished, I needed that riff and I dunno if we took the riff from the Staples song or whether Bruce did another version of that there. But, there were a couple of places where we were playing with that a lot, to fill in space in certain places and where the actual songs themselves could not be adapted and we would have to go back and create a piece based on that. Also in the

hotel room when the young Jack Fate meets up with Angela Basset for the first time, we used a kinda dubbed version of 'Political World' there that was kinda very interesting also, that was really fun to play with.

I thought that reminded me of something.

Very, very far under the surface you'll hear Bob's voice going "Political world, political world", but it's very mixed down.

Have you ever heard 'Farewell Angelina'

I've heard 'Farewell Angelina' too which is also amazing, that was the thing, there was obviously this falling into Ali Baba's cave or something, there's a treasure trove and you don't know where to start sometimes, there's so much great stuff to choose from. I mean even the song on the jukebox in the bar; I experimented with so many different songs before I finally decided on 'He Was a Friend of Mine'.

It almost has a crackly LP feel to it...

Yes, well it is off an LP, it's the old version of the song that he originally did. So again I would just like instinctively put different songs up against certain images and seeing if it felt right... That wound up working great.

Did Bob ever think about recording his rarer songs and using them?

Well I mean he... We recorded so many songs that he recorded a number of older songs and redid them in his way and a lot of that stuff just didn't end up making it into the movie. So there is a quite a bit of Bob music, that is just now in the movie right now. In fact I was just thinking as I said that, there is a rehearsal take of 'All Along The Watchtower'. Its like an 'All Along The Watchtower' jam without a vocal that I didn't find till after I finished the movie. I'd forgotten that he had done it and I thought, "God, that alone is a fantastic kind of instrumental", almost like an Allman Brothers version of 'All Along The Watchtower', that was just great.

I can imagine that being great, because what you tend to see when a spontaneous jam moment happen is - although he's not a conventionally great guitar player - he'll come up with an amazing riff and never go back to it again. He'll do it once and then all of a sudden Larry or Charlie would pick up on that riff.

Exactly, exactly and they can elaborate on it and then suddenly it takes off. And then one of them will start a lead off of that and then it starts to soar.

I can imagine this 'All Along The Watchtower' is like that.

Yeah it's really something. I have to remember to mention this Jeff Rosen, because that's something that should come out at some point it's really quite spectacular....

I think I'm gonna have to get going, I'm enjoying this so much, I could do this all afternoon.

Me too but I know you're a busy guy...

I have to go back to 'Curb Your Enthusiasm', but thank you very much

Well I never thought I'd be able to speak to you as long as this.

Oh that's my pleasure. I so deeply appreciate what you're doing and deeply appreciate your love for the movie and your devotion to it, I mean its been a great experience talking to you, I can't thank you enough for all your hard work.